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## CRITICAL NOTICES.

## GESENIUS' HEBREW DICTIONARY.

*Gesenius. Hebräisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament.* In Verbindung mit A. SOCIN und H. ZIMMERN bearbeitet von FR. BUHL. 13. Aufl., Leipzig, 1899 (F. C. W. Vogel).

No work is better calculated to give a vivid impression of the progress made in the knowledge of the Old Testament than the new edition of Gesenius' Dictionary, which has just made its appearance. During the four years which have elapsed since the publication of the previous edition, our knowledge of the old Hebrew language has been increased to an unusual degree by numerous grammatical, philological, critical, and exegetical writings. The constantly growing literature, often inaccessible and scattered over various periodicals, makes it imperative that a compendious collection be made of the results achieved to serve the student as a reliable guide. This would require a high degree of self-denial and untold labour, and we cannot be sufficiently grateful to Buhl and his co-workers for the scrupulous care and conscientiousness with which they have worked, and critically utilized the results of the numerous separate inquiries in the field of lexicography. They have created a veritable *répertoire* and an indispensable reference-book for the study of the Old Testament. It would lead too far to dwell on details, and the following remarks are meant only to be a modest contribution to the exegesis of passages that are difficult from a lexicographical point of view:—

Num. xxiv. 6 נחלִים נטיו is very remarkable. If the verb נטה is hardly applicable to נחל "brook," it is completely unintelligible where the *tertium comparationis* lies between the tents of Jacob and brooks. If we further consider that in triple expressions the comparison is always taken from the vegetable kingdom, it will not seem too bold to take the word נחל to mean "palm-tree," like the Arabic نخلة. It is true, the old versions did no longer know this meaning of the word. But in Sirach l. 12 (JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, X, p. 199) the words כערבי נחל are rendered by ὡς στελέχη φοινίκων. This strange translation finds its natural explanation in

the assumption that the translator knew a word נחל "palm-tree<sup>1</sup>." must therefore be translated "as palms stretch themselves," i. e. spread their branches.

Isa. i. 7 כמהפכת זרים in spite of Dillmann's objections, must probably read זרם "like the destruction by a rainspout." זרים could have come into the text all the easier from the first half of the verse, as זרם and זרים are so equal in form. Cf. my *Analecta*, 29, to Jer. xviii. 14.

Isa. v. 30 בעריפיה חשך ואור חשך. The expression offers both grammatical and etymological difficulties. Perhaps we must read פֶּעַר יִפְיָה, cf. Ps. cxxxix. 11 אור בערני ולילה חשך ישופני. The suffix in יפיה would then refer to ארץ.

In Isa. ix. 16 we have the verb נִשְׁמַח = Arab. يَسْمَح in ישמח; vide my remarks in the *Revue des Études Juives*, XXXV, 63, where I demonstrated the existence of that root from Sirach xxxvi. 17.

In Isa. lxiv. 20 הוֹתֵל הַהוּא לֵב אִפְרַיִם the words ought, perhaps, to be differently divided, and be read לֵבָה תִּלְחַטְהוּ<sup>2</sup>, and the sense is probably: "He (the idolater) pastures on the ashes," i. e. on volcanic soil<sup>3</sup>. The metaphor is sustained; the flame (לבה for להבה as Exod. iii. 2) will seize him and he cannot save himself, and say no longer: Is not deception in my right hand? The combination of להבה with להט occurs several times (Joel i. 19, ii. 3; Ps. lxxxiii. 15, cvi. 18). The verb להט occurs again in Deutero-Isaiah (xlii. 25). There are also other parallel points between xlii. 17-25 and xlv. 17-20.

Mic. iii. 9 המַתְעִבִּים מִשְׁפָּט does not agree with the parallel יַעֲקֹשׁוּ. The reading was perhaps מַעֲבִיתִים. Cf. vii. 3, where the same kindred form of עוֹת occurs. Cf. also עֵבֶט in Joel ii. 7. The expression עֵנִית מִשְׁפָּט is similar to Job viii. 3, xxxiv. 12.

Zech. iii. 9 וּמִשְׁתִּי אֶת עֵין הָאָרֶץ. The word cannot be etymologically explained<sup>4</sup>. There is no other passage in which מוֹשׁ occurs

<sup>1</sup> The original text was, doubtless, כעברי נחל "like palm-branches"; cf. Ezek. xix. 11, where LXX also render עֲבָרִים בֶּן עֲבָרִים by ἐν μέσφ στελεχῶν. This assumption is strengthened, not only by the parallel expression in the same verse, כשהלי ארזים, but the passage becomes intelligible only in this way. Schechter's allegation, Job xl. 22, does not prove anything for our verse.

<sup>2</sup> It is true, אִפְרַיִם has nowhere that special meaning. Yet are volcanoes mentioned in the Bible (Ps. civ. 32); cf. also Ps. lxxxiii. 15, Deut. xxxii. 22.

<sup>3</sup> The ו in הוֹתֵל, which came into the text later as a *Mater lectionis*, need not be considered. Cf. my *Analecta*, 61 sqq.; my explanation of Isa. i. 7 as given above; and infra, my notes on Zech. iii. 9 and Prov. xxix. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Graetz reads וּמִשְׁתִּי.

in a transitive sense (Mic. iii. 2 is certainly Hiphil, and v. 4 is not clear). The reading was probably ומשיתי "and I wash off." Cf. the verbs כבש and רחץ in this metaphorical sense, especially in Isa. iv. 4, where the construction is exactly the same. The existence of the root משה in Hebrew may be assumed with certainty; both the Rabbinical dialect (Levy iii. 267) and the Arabic possess the word in this meaning. But it was already unknown to the authors of the versions.

Zech. vi. 9 הניחו את רוחי, probably instead of הפיחו "caused to breathe." Cf. Ezek. xxii. 20, where Luzzatto correctly amends הניחו into הפיחו. Cf. *ibid.* the following verse. To our passage, cf. Ezek. xxxvii. 9 באי הרוח ופחי בהרוגים האלה 9.

Ps. lii. 7 ויחתך, probably to be derived from נחת, rather than from חתה "he may throw thee." This accords well with the context. Cf. הוריד, Hos. vii. 12; Obad. 3, 4; Jer. xlix. 16.

Ps. cxliii. 9 אליר כסיתי, perhaps altered from קסיתי. The Aramaic verb סכי "to look out" (=Hebr. צפה) cannot appear strange in this young Psalm.

Prov. xxix. 4 ואיש תרומות יהרסנו, read ואיש תרומות (already proposed by Baumgartner). Cf. the parallel במשפט. The versions read, perhaps, תרומות, but nothing can be proved for certain from their free rendering. תרומות occurs frequently in Jeremiah, Zephaniah, and the Psalms. Cf. in regard to this expression Ps. xliii. 1 מאיש מרמה ועולה, and, similarly, Pss. v. 7, lv. 24.

Job iv. 14 הפחיד עצמותי ורב עוצמותי sounds rather weak in that vigorous passage. It is further strange that פחד has first קראני and then הפחיד for its predicate. I therefore conjecture ורקב עצמותי הפחיד "The fire of disease frightened my bones." This would also restore the parallelism in the verse. רקב occurs once more in Job (xiii. 28). יבוא רקב בעצמי ותחתי ארגו Hab. iii. 16 is quite in accordance with our passage. Cf. Prov. xii. 4; xiv. 30.

Job xvii. 1 קברים לי cannot be grammatically explained, and is particularly weak as compared with the first portions of the verse. The reading was perhaps קברי מלי "my grave lies before me." It is true, in that case נגרי was rather to be expected.

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